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27 SEP 1978

MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy to the DCI for Resource Management

FROM:

[REDACTED]  
Program Assessment Office

SUBJECT: Public Acknowledgment of the "Fact of"  
Photoreconnaissance Satellites

REFERENCE: 22 September 1978 Memorandum, Same Subject

1. In accordance with the instructions in the reference, the DCI is developing and implementing a security plan to protect technology, operations, and products within the context of the Presidential decision to declassify the fact that the US conducts satellite photoreconnaissance.

2. The development and implementation of the security plan is being directed by the Deputy Director for Administration. A special inter-agency group, under the direction of the DCI's Security Committee, has been formed to coordinate all actions. The following implementation steps are in progress:

a. A basic message outlining the Presidential decision and security concerns to be addressed in briefing all cleared personnel of the Community has been prepared and coordinated, and is being forwarded to the DCI for release (Attachment 1).

b. Upon receipt of this message, addressees will notify subordinate commands and contractors, as appropriate.

[REDACTED] 25X1  
d. SSC/CIA will ensure briefing of CIA personnel, members of non-NFIB agencies and cleared parties of the Legislative Branch.

NRO review(s) completed.

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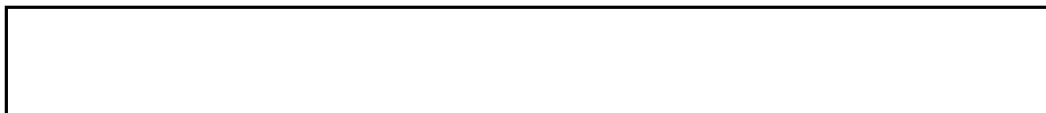
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f. A detailed Guidance and Implementation Plan is being prepared by COMIREX (draft copy at Attachment 2). This plan establishes criteria which characterizes what can be inferred from the open acknowledgment of the "fact of" and defines what must be carefully avoided in terms of public disclosure. The plan directs preparation of supplemental guidance for circulation on behalf of the DCI to be used by key Administration officials and public affairs officers in fielding questions. This guidance is expected to be in the form of matrices.

3. Comments on Attachment 2 should be sent to the IC Staff, attention  by noon on 28 September.

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Attachments:  
As Stated

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GUIDANCE AND IMPLEMENTATION PLAN  
FOR  
DECLASSIFYING THE "FACT OF" PHOTOGRAPHIC SATELLITE RECONNAISSANCE

PART I - GENERAL

1. The Decision. The President has directed declassification of the fact that the U.S. conducts satellite photoreconnaissance including acknowledgment that photoreconnaissance is one of the national technical means used by the U.S. for verification of compliance with SALT and other arms control agreements.

2. Implementation

a. This decision on declassification of the "fact of" is consistent and supportive of Administration policy for greater openness within the intelligence community. While this clearly represents a move to reduce overclassification and officially acknowledges a fact that already is widely known, the preservation of the integrity of U.S. intelligence-gathering satellite operations continues to be a matter of overriding national importance. Until now, our disclosure policies, as adjusted over the years, have served this end. It is in support of this continuing requirement that this guidance has been developed.

b. This guidance is divided into three parts:

Part I: General

Part II: Criteria for Disclosing the "Fact of"

Part III: Implementation Tasks

3. Timing

a. All implementation tasks are being planned for completion in time for an anticipated Presidential acknowledgment during a 1 October 1978 speech on space policy.

b. Until the President makes such an announcement, the "fact of" shall remain classified confidential [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] This contingency will be made clear as a part of each task.

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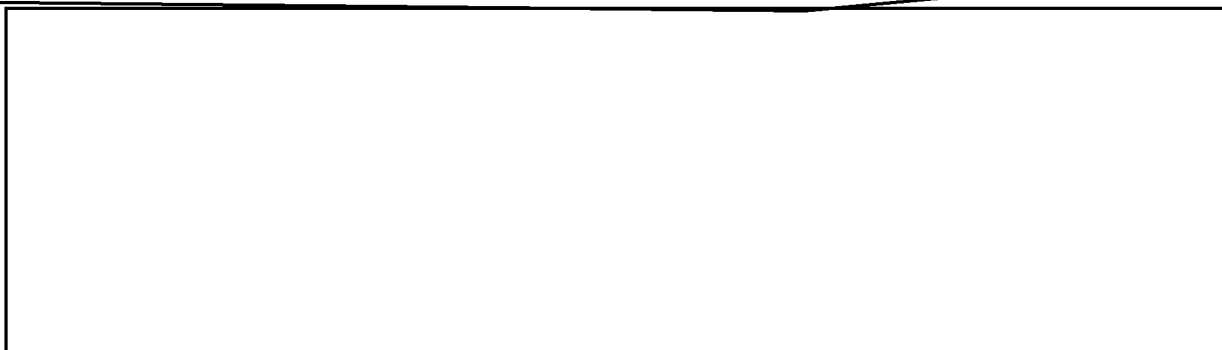
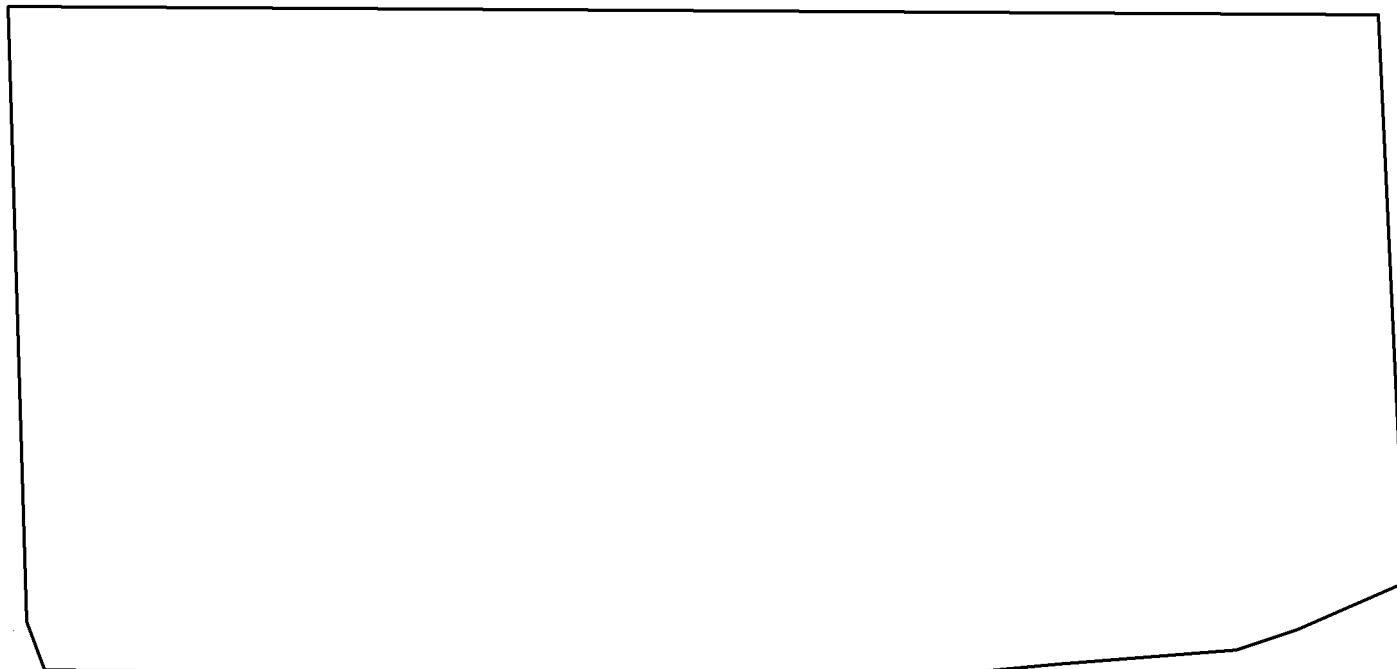
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PART III - IMPLEMENTATION TASKS ASSOCIATED WITH DECLASSIFICATION  
OF THE "FACT OF"

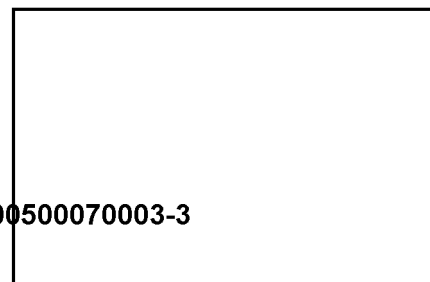
1. The declassification of the mere "fact of" the U.S. photographic satellite reconnaissance program is meaningful in the purest sense only on a conceptual level. In a practical sense, this simple "fact" will always be used within some context related to national security. In other words, discussions of the "fact of" photographic satellite reconnaissance inherently will reveal some "facts about" this program. The challenge to implementing the decision to declassify the "fact of" is a challenge to define clearly the limited "facts about" photographic satellite reconnaissance that are implied in declassification of the "fact of."

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officials in dealing with this problem, specific guidance is being developed and will be circulated at the earliest opportunity. It is envisioned that this guidance will amplify and clarify the guidance provided by the initial public affairs questions and answers developed by ACDA.

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Currently indoctrinated personnel have been advised through the security plan notification cable that any declassified discussion of photographic satellite reconnaissance must be limited to the acknowledgment of the mere "fact of" this program. So that these individuals can more realistically deal with the declassified "fact of" within the context of their normal activities, supplemental guidance is being prepared. This guidance will address the finer points of how to deal with the paradox of declassifying the "fact of" while continuing to classify a wide range of "facts about."

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c. Modification of present decompartmentation instructions so as to include guidance to those individuals normally receiving decompartmented satellite PHOTINT products.

Such guidance would make it clear to these individuals that while the "fact of" is unclassified, the products and the wide range of "facts about" remain classified.

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4. Additional topics which should be placed under review include the following:

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